

Planning and Management of Land Resources

The challenge in improving land use decisions in Canada is the need to balance the immediate economic values of land against its many non-economic values, for example, cultural values. Governments are responding to this challenge through a variety of mechanisms.

Recent integrated land use and resource management planning efforts have often been based on a broad ecosystem framework. Participation by local communities, Aboriginal people, and stakeholders in decision making and the use of tools such as satellite mapping are proving complex but critical to success of these and other planning processes. Their use ensures that decisions are made with accurate data and that all affected people and communities have the opportunity to influence outcomes.

Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Combating Desertification and Drought

Although Canada has virtually no deserts, large areas of its Prairie provinces are vulnerable to drought and erosion. Governments have responded by encouraging rural economic diversification, a move away from agricultural practices unsuited to the region, and research into solutions to drought and erosion problems.

Canada has a long history of working with developing countries to address desertification problems through international governmental and non-governmental development bodies. This co-operation with developing-country partners has continued with support for the negotiating process that led to the Desertification Convention. With the Convention now concluded, Canadians are working with partner countries and groups on ways to best meet priorities. We are co-operating with the international community to develop a sound scientific basis for effective anti-desertification activities.

Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development

Canada's mountain regions are not subject to the same population pressures as other regions of Canada. However, recognizing that economic development activities must take into account the fragility of mountain ecosystems, Canada is improving land use and resource management policies for these regions. The forestry and mining industries have made major improvements in their practices to limit impact on mountain ecosystems. A code of ethics for the tourism industry has also been developed.

Mountain areas are well represented in federal, provincial, and territorial networks of protected areas. Policies are in place to ensure that land use in parks is co-ordinated with management of surrounding districts and with initiatives that encourage sustainability.